Internal Security Fund
Police (ISFP) & Borders and Visa (ISFB)

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Justice Programme
Drugs Policy Initiatives

Guide for applicants 2019

Action Grants

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HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	**Publication Date**	**Change**	**Page**
1.0	08.07.2019	▪ Initial version	

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. GLOSSARY

For the purposes of this guide, please note the following definitions:

Action/Project: when an application/proposal is awarded a grant, this application becomes an action. Action can be also referred to as a **project**.

Affiliated entities: there are two options how entities can be affiliated to each other. The first option concerns several entities forming together one entity, possibly specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action. They will be treated as one entity, the so-called **sole beneficiary**. The second option concerns entities having a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. Please also refer to Article 187 of the Financial Regulation for more information on affiliated entities. During the application process, the affiliated entities could also be referred to as **linked third parties**.

Applicant: the organisation which submits the proposal, also known as **lead applicant**. Depending on the requirements of each call, the applicant may submit an application on its own, or in partnership with other organisations, referred to as co-applicants. Applicant and co-applicants may together be referred to as **applicants** or **participants**.

Beneficiary/beneficiaries: organisation(s) that receives EU co-funding either directly or indirectly via the coordinator following successful application in one of the EU's funding programmes and signature of the related grant agreement (during the application process reference is made to the "applicant(s))".

Co-applicant: the organisation which, in cooperation with the applicant, participates in designing the project activities and participates in the partnership which submits the application. The co-applicant aims to receive Union co-financing for the costs it incurs during the implementation of the project. During the application process, co-applicant(s) can be referred to as **partner(s)** and/or **participant(s)**.

Coordinator: when an application is submitted on behalf of more than one entity and the grant is awarded, the applicant becomes the coordinator (and is referred to as such in the relevant multi-beneficiaries grant agreement and any project-related documentation). The coordinator receives mandates from all beneficiaries participating in the project to act on their behalf.

ECAS: the European Commission's Authentication Service. It is the system for logging on to a whole range of websites and online services run by the Commission. The applicant will **need to set up an ECAS account** if he/she wants to apply for funding on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

Electronic Submission System of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal: the part of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal where the applicant will upload and validate their proposal.

Mono-beneficiary grant agreement: grant agreement where one single entity (the Beneficiary) implements an action and enters in a contractual relationship with the Commission.

Multi-beneficiary grant agreement: grant agreement where more than one beneficiary implements an action and enters into a contractual relationship with the Commission. By signing the agreement or the accession form, the beneficiaries accept the grant and agree to implement the action under their responsibility and in accordance with the agreement with all the obligations and conditions that the latter sets out.

Projects information meeting: a one-day meeting that may be organised by the Commission in Brussels in order to brief project coordinators on grant management and implementation rules.

REA: the Research Executive Agency. It is in charge of the Participant Register, the validation of legal entities and of checking of the financial capacity of applicants.

The Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal (FTOP): the website hosting the information about funding for Horizon 2020 as well as other Union programmes, including ISF, AMIF and JUST-DRUG.

The LEAR (Legal Entity Appointed Representative): the appointed representative within the beneficiary organisation. He/she is authorised to manage all the organisation-related data on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal and appoints representatives within their organisation to electronically sign grant agreements or financial statements for project costs.

The Participant Identification Code (PIC number): a 9-digit participant identification code, received upon completing the registration of the entity online.

The Participant Register: the European Commission's online register of the beneficiaries participating in ISF, AMIF, JUST-DRUGS and other European Union programmes. This allows consistent handling of the beneficiaries' official data and avoids multiple requests for the same information.

2. INTRODUCTION

The **Internal Security Fund** (ISF Police[1] and ISF Borders and Visa[2]), the **Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund** (AMIF)[3] and the Justice Programme[4] are implemented via Annual Work Programmes (**AWP**) adopted each year by the European Commission (the **Commission**).

Each AWP describes the priorities set for that particular year and contains details of the financial appropriations earmarked for the various grant schemes. These grant schemes are implemented through calls for proposals and/or invitation letters to a named beneficiary in case of direct awards.

The calls for proposals **are published on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal**. The website of the Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs will also continue to publish information regarding ISF, AMIF and theJustice Programme AWPs and calls and will provide a link to the calls published on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

Submitting an application is only possible via the online Electronic Submission System of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal and before the call deadline.

This guide for applicants is designed as a reference document to help you prepare your proposal. It provides all the necessary information for preparing and submitting your application and answers questions you may ask yourself during this process.

Please note that this guide does not supersede the rules and conditions laid out in the following documents which should be consulted in case of doubt**:**

- Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, hereafter referred to in this document as the Rules of Application of the Financial Regulation;
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, The relevant call for proposals for action grants, hereafter referred to in this document as the call for proposals for action grants (or the respective invitation letter to named beneficiary in case of a direct award);
- The model grant agreement, hereafter referred to as the model grant agreement or MGA.

This Guide consists of three main parts:

- <u>Key documents and participants</u>

This section describes the content of the application package and the general conditions for participating in the call for proposals for action grants managed by DG HOME.

[1] Regulation (EU) No 513/2014; OJ L 150, 20.05.2014, p. 93.
[2] Regulation (EU) No 515/2014); OJ L 150, 20.05.2014, p. 143.
[3] Regulation (EU) No 516/2014; OJ L 150, 20.05.2014, p. 168.
[4] Regulation No 1382/2013; OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 73.

- Submission of proposals

This section describes the entire process of submission of proposals and has two sub-sections:

The first sub-section refers to the necessary preparatory steps. This includes: (1) reference to the background documents that you need to consult prior to preparing a proposal; (2) instructions on the process for creating a user account or an ECAS account; (3) the registration of the applicant organisation in the European Commission's Participant Register; and (4) general recommendations on how to best prepare your proposal.

The second sub-section guides you through the different steps of the application process itself: it covers the registration process for the participating legal entities and the actual submission process itself, namely completing the so-called Part A (administrative information and budget of the proposal), Part B (technical content) and the Annexes.

- Evaluation process of the applications

This section contains information on the evaluation process and criteria when reviewing and evaluating the submitted proposals.

Should you have further questions, the following options are at your disposal:

– A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section can be found under the relevant call for proposals for action grants displayed on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

– **For information on how to register** or related enquiries, please look on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

– **IT helpdesk** – you can contact the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal IT helpdesk for **questions related exclusively to the online submission tool** such as forgotten passwords, access rights and roles, technical aspects of submission of proposals, etc. Requests must be submitted via the Research Enquiry Service, by completing the Helpdesk Contact Form.

Note that minimum technical requirements are needed for using the online submission system (accessible with your ECAS account).

– For **non-IT related questions**, you can contact the DG Migration and Home Affairs programme mailboxes:

HOME-AMIF-UNION-ACTIONS @ec.europa.eu (for AMIF calls)

HOME-ISF@ec.europa.eu (for ISF "Police" and "Borders and Visa")

HOME-DRUGS@ec.europa.eu (for the drugs component of the Justice Programme)

Please do not contact the Commission before having tried to find the information in the documentation that is provided to you. Please ensure you have exhausted all the options before contacting the helpdesks.

This guide is updated annually to make it as user-friendly as possible. Should you have a suggestion or comments on how to improve this guide for next year's call, please send us an email at HOME-NOTIFICATIONS-E1@ec.europa.eu.

Finally, please be aware that submitting your proposal can take some time even if you have all the necessary information ready at hand. **Do not wait until the deadline to start the online submission process!** We strongly advise you to complete your proposal sufficiently in advance to avoid any last minute problems, including IT issues

3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Working with the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal requires a good preparation on behalf of the applicants before submitting an application. Even though the online system enables you to save successive versions of an application, the Commission strongly encourages to have fully prepared the proposal before starting the online submission process.

Note that the online submission system is a **two-step process**:

- **Registration of the applicant organisation** through a specific procedure;
- Submission of the proposal itself, broken down into three parts: **Part A**; **Part B** and **Annexes.**

3.1. Preparing for the submission of your application

There are several stages to observe when preparing for the submission of your application, such as consulting documents (see below); signing up to your ECAS account for registered users or creating an ECAS account for new users; and registering your organisation in the Participant Register.

3.1.1. Documents to consult

Prior to taking the decision of submitting a proposal and filling in the different application forms, please verify whether your organisation complies with specific eligibility criteria of the call. AMIF, ISF and the Justice Programme have restrictions concerning the countries in which applicants and/or co-applicants are established. You should also check whether your planned activities are in line with the objectives of the call.

For this, the very first step is to go through the relevant documentation in detail. The key documents to consult are the following:

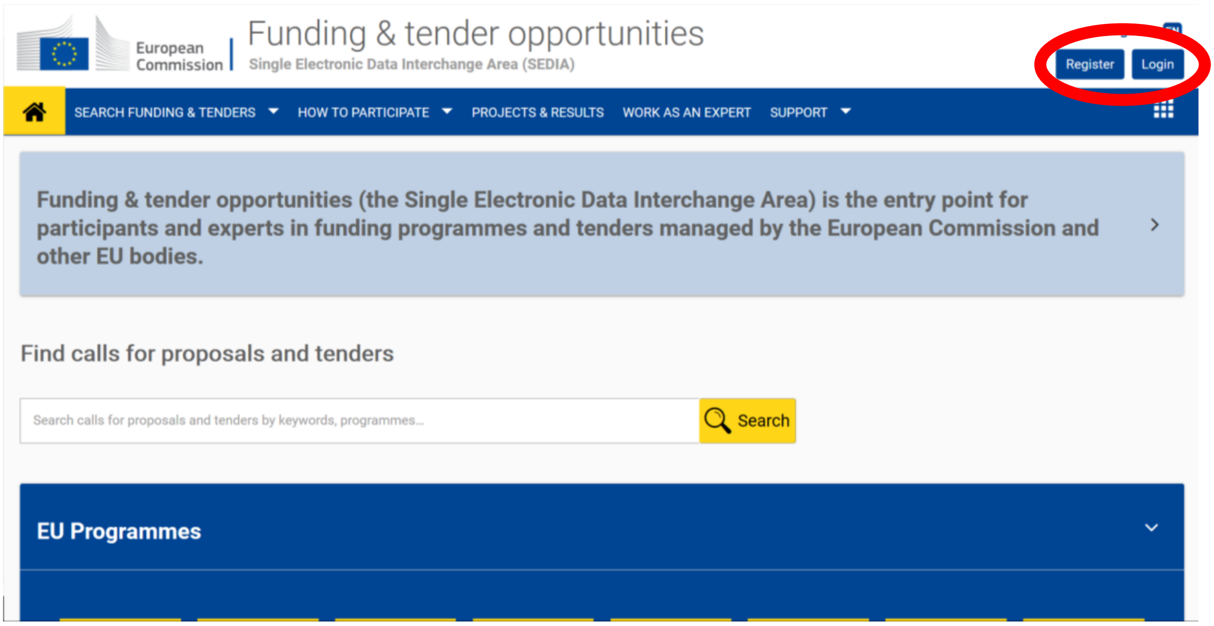
- the Instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis (Regulation (EU) No 513/2014) hereinafter "ISF Police" ;
- the Instrument for financial support for external borders and visa (Regulation (EU) No 515/2014) , hereafter "ISF Borders and Visa";
- Regulation (EU) No 516/2014 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund;
- Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 laying down general provisions on the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and on the instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management.
- the Justice Programme (Regulation No 1382/2013) related to the drugs policy initiatives;
- the relevant AWP (ISF/AMIF/Justice);
- the relevant call for proposals for projects or the respective invitation letter to named beneficiary in case of a direct award;
- the model grant agreement.

3.1.2. Create a user account on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal – your ECAS Account

Remember, applications in response to this call are only possible via the Electronic Submission System of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal. In order to use this system you first need to create a user account, the so-called ECAS account.

To do so, you simply need to access the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

Figure 1: Screen shot of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal homepage



You can see in the screen shot above that the homepage (in the upper right corner) refers to registered and non-registered users.

– If you do not already have a user account for the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal, simply click on 'Register' (in the upper right corner next to 'Login') and register online.

– If you already have a user account for the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal, log in (click on 'Login' in the upper right corner) and start entering the required information.

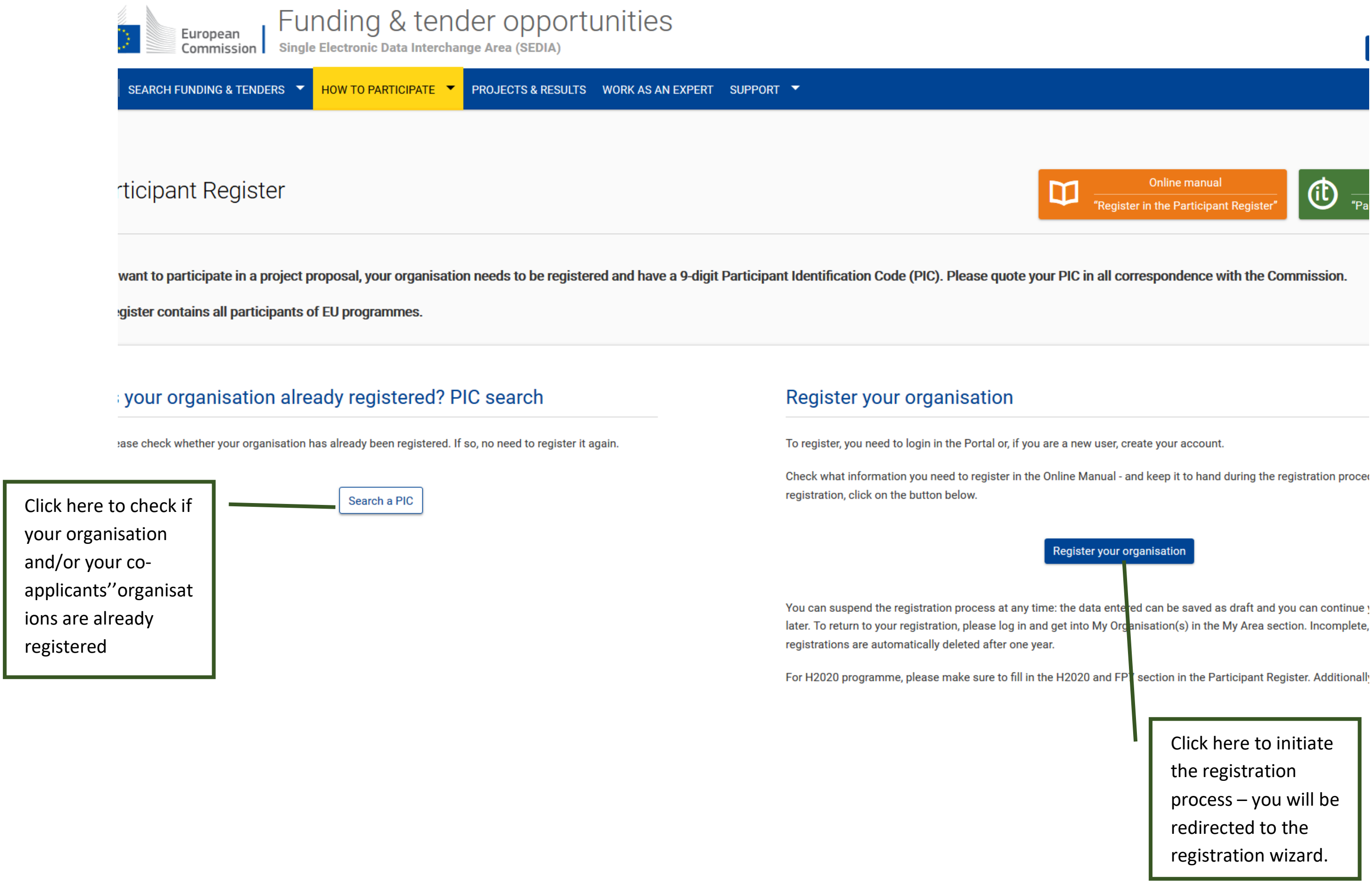
3.1.3. Register your organisation - Participant Register

With the ECAS account at hand, you can proceed to the next step, which is to register your organisation; this is done through the European Commission's Participant Register.

– The European Commission has an online register of the organisations participating in various EU programmes called the Participant Register. This allows consistent handling of different organisations' official data and avoids multiple requests of the same information.

– You should **check first if your organisation is already registered** on the Participant Register

Figure 2: Screen shot of the Participant Register



– If you do not find your organisation there, and only in this case, you should start the registration process by clicking on 'Register your organisation'.

– To complete this registration process, you will need to provide information about your entity's legal status and its finances. You will need to upload documents which are essential to check the eligibility and financial capacity of your organisation. For those documents that are **in any other language than the official EU languages, an <u>official translation</u> of the document in English needs be provided.** Later on, in case your proposal is successful, these documents will be revised and analysed by the REA Validation Services. It is upon this information that your organisation legal status will be defined. Once validated, this status will be applied for the whole duration of the Programme.

– You do not need to complete the registration process in a single session. You can enter some information, save it and **continue** later on the **My Organisation(s)** page of the "Manage my Area" section. Incomplete draft registrations are automatically deleted after one year.

– Once your registration is finalised, you will receive a **9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC number)**. You will need the PIC numbers of all applicants (i.e. not for subcontractors) in order to complete part A of the application.

- The person who registers the organisation, called 'self-registrant', can submit updates and corrections (with corresponding supporting documents) on the **My Organisation(s)** page of the "Manage my Area" section.

- Please note that in case the registered organisation receives EU funding, the 'self-registrant' will be replaced by the appointed representative **LEAR** (Legal Entity Appointed Representative). **This person will then be the only person able to provide further updates**.

3.1.4. General guidance before drafting your proposal

Call for proposals are competitive. A weak element in an otherwise decent proposal may lead to a medium score or even a negative evaluation, resulting in the application not being recommended for EU funding.

With this in mind we advise you, in addition to the above-mentioned considerations and suggestions, to consider the following aspects before starting to draft of a proposal:

Relevance: check that your intended proposal addresses a priority indicated in the call text. Proposals falling out of the scope of the priorities of a Call for proposals will be scored low.

Completeness: check that your proposal includes all relevant information, as it will be evaluated only on the basis of the content submitted (such as information, documents etc.). Follow closely the format of the template of Part B and ensure that all the requested information is uploaded. Avoid confusing quality with quantity: good proposals are clearly drafted, concise and easy to understand. The page limit for Part B of your proposal is 50 pages for the technical part. **Any text after page 50 will be watermarked and evaluators will not take those pages into consideration**.

Management quality: clearly indicate the ability for high-quality management adapted to the scope of the intended activities of the organisation. Good financial management is a key component of management quality and adequacy between activities and requested budget is important.

Orientation towards results and impact: good proposals clearly forecast the results that will be achieved, and how the participants intend to use these results. In addition, good proposals include a sound and credible evaluation plan, not only focusing on process evaluation, but looking in particular at outcomes.

The above points are central to drafting a proposal with a chance of being recommended for funding.

3.1.5. Guidance on communication, dialogue and networking

Meetings in Brussels
As from the budget year 2019, for Union actions DG HOME would like to encourage more dialogue among the individual project beneficiaries and between the community of project beneficiaries, stakeholders and the Commission services on the contents development of the individual projects and the communication of (interim) results. The aim is in particular to promote more interaction about innovation in project outputs and to increase visibility, learning effects and synergies. This could involve in particular interaction among communities of practitioners, policy makers and the Commission

services on the potential for replication of deliverables and/or the scaling up of individual projects, with the integration of deliverables into mainstream activities and policies.
DG HOME invites applicants to reflect on how to reinforce the dialogue throughout the different phases of the project cycle with the Commission services and other project beneficiaries in the same area. So far, practices have included:

- the organisation of project kick off meetings, where a DG HOME representative may be invited to provide information on efficient grant management, the meaning and scope of the provisions of the grant agreement (including eligibility of costs) and how to ensure sound financial management and a solid audit trail;

- the organisation of meetings presenting the scope of the project, mid-term results or final results, where other organisations (from other Member States) outside the consortium may be invited, and where a DG HOME representative may be invited to participate in exchanges of views and inform participants on EU policy developments and context.

Besides such practices, applicants could envisage to introduce meetings in Brussels during the life time of the project to discuss and shape more proactively with the Commission services and possible other stakeholders the contents of the project, the implementation challenges, next steps and/or possible policy implications. The advantage of organising such meetings in Brussels would be to have a bigger access to input from various departments of the Commission, possibly other EU institutions and stakeholders at EU level, and obtain a broader, more multidisciplinary input than what is obtained in meetings.

Applicants are therefore invited to foresee travel and subsistence costs for those meetings during the course of the project, and to describe their planned activities in the work package 1.

Stronger communication, dissemination and visibility actions

Moreover, DG HOME invites applicants to reflect on how to reinforce the communication, dissemination and visibility of the contents of projects (outputs and outcomes). The aim would be to increase the frequency of communication moments and enhance the quality of communication material available on Union actions, going beyond regular project dissemination activities.

DG HOME is currently developing a number of specific communication products to present Union actions for AMIF, ISF-Borders, ISF-Police and Justice-Drugs and their results in an attractive manner and to explain in simple terms to ordinary citizens what value the projects are bringing to them and to society. For this purpose, throughout 2018, DG HOME has worked, on a pilot basis, with a sample of project beneficiaries to increase awareness and visibility on how their individual projects contribute to migration and security polices in the Member States. For individual projects, DG HOME has been gathering information on the objectives, activities and achievements in terms of – among others- cross border cooperation, European dimension of the policies supported, targets reached, interesting success stories and personalised testimonies of practitioners. It may include social media products, communication and visual material such as logos, photos, and infographics. The result are individual project factsheets with an easy to read description, attractive visual material and a story on targets, (mid-term) results and possible next steps for the project's future. In addition, the individual factsheets are being bundled in "snapshots", compilations of projects in a given policy area, presented in an appropriate manner the framework of policy developments and overall context.

DG HOME would like to roll this practice out more systematically and further develop the use of such products. Therefore, it invites applicants to develop from the start of the project, as part of its communication activities, their own factsheet, and update it, where appropriate, but at least at the end of the end of the project. The advantage of a one- or two-page factsheet is that it provides a short hand description for practitioners, policy makers and Commission services interested in the individual project for first reference. It can thus serve not only as a starting point for dissemination to the public but also in future exchanges in communities of practitioners.

Interested applicants are therefore invited to plan appropriate activities, include them in the description of the action, and allocate the necessary resources. Selected applicants will be invited to add a draft factsheet during the preparations of the grant agreement. The draft could then be expanded throughout the project life cycle under the tab "continuous reporting". This tab is also used for a regular communication on the state of play of the project, among the consortium, but also with outside organisations, including the Commission services. Moreover, project beneficiaries could allow access to their draft products under the tab continuous reporting to representative of other project beneficiaries, thus developing synergies and offering opportunities for dialogue.

3.2. Application for an action

Once you have selected a call and/or a topic, you can start creating your draft proposal. A step by step tutorial is available on the IT How to wiki page.

Please note that you have the possibility to save your proposal and come back to it at a later stage. For instructions on how to do so, check the IT How to wiki page.

The project application is composed of:

- **Part A**, which includes the administrative information and the estimated budget table
- **Part B**, which includes the technical content of the proposal; and
- **Annex(es)**: ***audit report***(s) for each organisation (applicant or co-applicant) requesting EU contribution above EUR 750.000, produced by an approved external auditor. The audit report(s) shall certify the organisation's accounts of the last financial year available. Not applicable for public bodies and international organisations**.**

3.2.1. Languages

In principle, project proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, for efficiency reasons, the Commission would strongly encourage applicants to **submit their proposal in English**.

In addition applicants should be aware that the Commission will use English as a language of communication regarding the grant agreement preparation, management and monitoring.

3.2.2. Application form: Part A – Administrative part

Part A comprises fields of required information, checklists and declarations to be filled in and must be completed directly via the online submission tool; it is structured in three sections:

- Section 1: General information
- Section 2: Administrative data of the organisation
- Section 3: Budget

Please note that Part A follows a common template and is applicable to all funding programmes and all financial instruments, regardless of the specificities of each.

Note that in order to complete Part A and in case of actions submitted by several applicants:

- **the lead applicant (coordinator) is responsible for submitting the application**
- **all other applicants (not subcontractors) must be registered in the Participant Register and communicate their PIC to the applicant (coordinator)**
- **the lead applicant (coordinator) must have the action budget per participant**

Figure 3: Screen shot of the Table of Contents of Part A

Section	*Title*	*Action*
1	*General Information*	
2	*Participants and Contacts*	
3	*Budget*	

Section 1: General information

In this section, you should provide the Acronym, Proposal Title, Duration (in months), Free Keywords and an Abstract (max. 2000 characters) explaining the objectives of the proposal, how these will be achieved, and their relevance to the priorities of the call.

The abstract will be used as a short description of the proposal in the evaluation process and possibly in communication about selected projects. Therefore, do not include any confidential information, use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters.

In the "Declarations" section, there are also a number of self-declarations to be made by the applicant (coordinator) by clicking the corresponding boxes, some of them on behalf of the co-applicants. The applicant (coordinator) has to check with all the co-applicants before clicking those boxes.

The applicant (coordinator) declares:

a) to have explicit consent of all applicants on their participation and on the content of the proposal,

b) that the information in the proposal is correct and complete,

c) that they are fully compliant with the exclusion and eligibility criteria set out in the call for proposals/topic, and has the financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed action.

d) that each applicant has confirmed that they are fully compliant with the exclusion and eligibility criteria set out in the call for proposal/topic, and they have the financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed action.

Section 2: Participants and contacts

The applicant (coordinator) will encode the PIC number of their organisation and of every other co-applicant. Part of the administrative data will be filled in automatically after encoding the PIC number. Then, the applicant (coordinator) will be required to fill in the contact details for every co-applicant. Hence, it is recommended to have this information at hand when completing the part A.

When several beneficiaries/applicants are involved in an action that has been selected for funding, they shall sign a **consortium agreement** prior to signing the grant agreement. The consortium agreement must not contradict but shall complement the grant agreement (see Article 25.3 of the Model grant agreement). It should set the framework for a successful project implementation, i.e. settle all issues that might hamper the smooth and seamless cooperation of the different actors for the different parts of the project. For guidance on consortium agreements, consult the Horizon 2020 Online Manual "*Guidance-How to draw up your consortium agreement*". The consortium agreement does not have to be submitted with the proposal, but has to be available by the time of the grant agreement signature.

In case of an application with affiliated entities to public bodies: as the affiliated entities do not sign the grant agreement, they do not have to be registered in the Participant Register at application stage, and they do not have to be listed in the list of participants (cf. step 4 "Manage Your Related Parties" and visible under the section 2 of the part A).

For British applicants: please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 34.3.1(b) of the grant agreement.

Section 3: Budget

The applicant (coordinator) must fill in the budget table as presented below.

White cells: to be filled by the applicant (coordinator) Grey cells: automatically calculated by the system or disabled fields not relevant to the call

Column A: direct personnel cost

Column B.1: direct travel costs

Column B.2: direct subsistence costs

Column C: direct costs of subcontracting

Column D: this column is not active as it is not relevant for the calls

Column E: other direct costs, which can include costs for equipment[5], consumables, conferences/events, publications and other goods and services

[5] For additional information on costs planned for equipment, please take into account the provisions of Article 6.2 *E. Other direct costs* of the MGA.

Please refer to Article 6 of the Model Grant Agreement for a detailed description and calculation methods of the eligible cost items.

Column F: indirect costs, which are fixed to 7% of the total eligible direct costs (sum of budget categories A to E)

Column G: total costs. They are automatically calculated (sum of budget categories A to F). This amount represents the estimated eligible costs of the action which will be indicated in Article 5.2 of the grant agreement if the proposal is retained for funding. This amount is used to calculate the requested EU contribution (column K).

Column H: receipts. This should include any contribution/income generated by the activities and any contribution from third parties. The breakdown per applicant is indicative at the application stage.

Column I: reimbursement rate. It represents the co-funding rate indicated in the call. This column is automatically filled-in by the IT system.

Column J: maximum EU contribution. It is automatically calculated by the IT system by applying the value of column I (reimbursement rate) to the value of column G (total costs).

Column K: requested EU contribution. This column should be filled-in by the applicant with the actual, desired EU contribution. The requested EU contribution can be **equal or lower** than the value indicated in column J (K≤G-H). The breakdown per applicant of the requested EU contribution is indicative and its final distribution remains the responsibility of the participants.

In case of an application with affiliated entities to public bodies: the estimated costs of the applicant must also include the estimated costs of its linked affiliated entities. The applicant must fill in the budget table (cf. step 5 "Edit proposal", under section 3 of the part A) with the estimated costs of its affiliated entities included. The amount indicated in the budget table in Part A shall be detailed in the Annex of Part B Forecast Budget Calculation.

Please note that, for the sake of flexibility the model grant agreement includes different options. In the case of the calls covered by this guide, article 15 applies option 1 and article 28 applies option 2.

3.2.3. Application form: Part B – Description of the action

Part B concerns the technical content of the proposal and contains a description of activities that will be undertaken within the action.

Applicants must write the proposal **following the template** provided by the Commission. The template is a fill-in enabled Word document. You can enter text only under the non-protected fields. Once completed, the document needs be **converted into a PDF before being uploaded on the Electronic Submission System.**

When filling in the template, please avoid repeating information across the sections and always keep in mind that the evaluation of your application is solely based on the information provided in the project application.

Please note that there is a page limit: filled in, Part B should have no more than 50 pages.

All tables need to be included within this limit. The minimum font size allowed is 11 points. The page size is A4. If you attempt to upload a proposal longer than the specified limit before the deadline, you will receive an automatic warning and will be advised to shorten and re-upload the proposal. After the deadline, any excess pages will be overprinted with a watermark and disregarded. **Please do not consider the page limit as a target!** It is in your interest to keep your text as concise as possible, since evaluation experts rarely view unnecessarily long proposals in a positive light.

The structure of the template is as follows:

PART 1 – SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

This part should provide an overall description of the action, including the expected impact, outcomes and outputs of the action, activities, number and type of (short, medium and long term) target groups. This summary should give readers a clear idea of what the action is about. It should be structured and descriptive; it should not merely provide lists of objectives, activities, beneficiaries and outputs.

PART 2 –CONTEXT OF THE ACTION AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

This part should present the context of the action (including your understanding of the relevant EU policies and to what extent this action builds up on previous project results in the field) and analyse the European needs which will be addressed by the action.

PART 3 – GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY

This part should present the general objective of the action correlated to the expected impact. The objective shall correspond to the relevant priority(ies) defined in the call for proposals. The impact is defined as the long term effect produced by the action. Furthermore, it should demonstrate the European dimension of the action and its importance and effect throughout the EU. It should also describe which countries will directly and indirectly benefit from the action, illustrates the European dimension of the planned activities and which countries will be directly involved in the activities of the action and where the activities will take place.

This part should also define the specific objectives (correlated to the expected outcomes) of the action. For each specific objective, appropriate indicators for measuring the progress of achievement including units of measurement, baseline and target value shall be defined. The outcome is defined as the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effect of an Action's outputs. It shall be clear how the outcomes are expected to contribute to the general objective.

This part should finally present the approach and methodology underpinning the activities of the action and explain why they are the most suitable for achieving the objectives of the action.

PART 4 – DESCRIPTION OF WORK PACKAGES AND ACTIVITIES

This part should describe in detail the activities which the applicant and co-applicants will undertake in order to achieve the objectives described in Part 3. This section is divided into work packages, i.e.: sets of activities leading to a specific outcome that the action wishes to produce.

Actions shall have a minimum of two work packages:

- Work package 1 with the management and coordination activities,
- Work package 2 with a specific set of outputs/deliverables related to the objective(s) of the action and;
- If applicable, as many additional work packages as deemed necessary by the applicants.

The division into work packages should be logical and guided by the different identifiable outputs of an activity. Under each work package an objective (expected outcome) shall be defined, as well as specific activities, outputs and deliverables.

In case of a project duration of 24 months or more, a **mid-term progress report** shall be foreseen as a deliverable under Work package 1 (see Article 14.1 of the Model Grant Agreement).

In certain cases, more details have to be provided by work-package:

- If the estimated costs for travel and subsistence as presented in the Budget for the proposal (B.1+B.2) exceed 15% of the estimated staff costs, you should provide detailed information on the nature and objectives of each trip, its relevance to the project, location (EU/non-EU) and number of participants;
- If purchase of equipment is foreseen in the project, you should describe and list the equipment to be purchased.

PART 5 – PRESENTATION OF APPLICANTS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This part should justify why the individual applicant, co-applicants and their affiliated entities are the best suited to participate in this action. It should explain what the applicant, each co-applicant and their affiliated entities will do in the action. Each co-applicant should have a specific and clear role and should have a meaningful participation, i.e. actively participate in the implementation of the activities of the action and incur related costs.

In this Part, you should provide an overview of the estimated effort to carry out the project, expressed in person-months, and its indicative distribution among Applicants and Work Packages. The effort must be expressed in person months and should correlate to the staff costs of each organisation (indicated in Part A, Section 3: Budget).

Below you can find an example on how to calculate the effort in person months. Please note that it is only for illustrative purpose.

Calculation of person months

If 1 year = 220 working days, then 1 month = 220/12= 18,33 days. So 24 days of work for one person would be 24/18,33= 1,31 person months.

To calculate person months for a given activity, multiply the percentage of your effort associated with the activity by the number of months of the appointment.

For example for work-package 1 and applicant ABCD:

Provide an overview of the estimated effort, in planned person-months, and of its distribution among Applicants and Work Packages. Add as many columns/rows as needed.						
	WP1	**WP2**	**WP3**	**WP4**	**WP5**	**Total**
Applicant ABCD	**26,4**					
Applicant EFGH						
Applicant XYZW						
Applicant QWER						
Total						

In the implementation of WP1 - Administrative and financial management applicant ABCD provides a project manager working full time on the project for the entire project duration, which is 24 months. ABCD organization also employs a financial project manager/accountant working 1/10 of time on the project.

In the example described above, the calculation of the project effort for WP 1 in person months for the ABCD organization will be as follows:

• 26,4 person months=24 person months for the project manager + 2,4 person months for the financial project manager/accountant.

If more than one (co-)applicant is involved in the same work-package, the person months for each (co-)applicant should be listed.

You should list all staff included in the budget (under Budget heading A) by function (e.g. project manager, financial manager, researcher etc.) and briefly describe their tasks.

This part should also explain the overall project management concept, in particular how decisions will be taken and how permanent and effective communication will be ensured.
It should describe all possible risks, uncertainties, difficulties related to the implementation of the action and the respective mitigating measures/strategies. It should describe the monitoring and evaluation tools of the action as well as the disseminations strategy and the planned follow-up of the action after the end of the financial support of the European Union.

PART 6 - INFORMATION CONCERNING OTHER EU GRANTS/PROCUREMENT

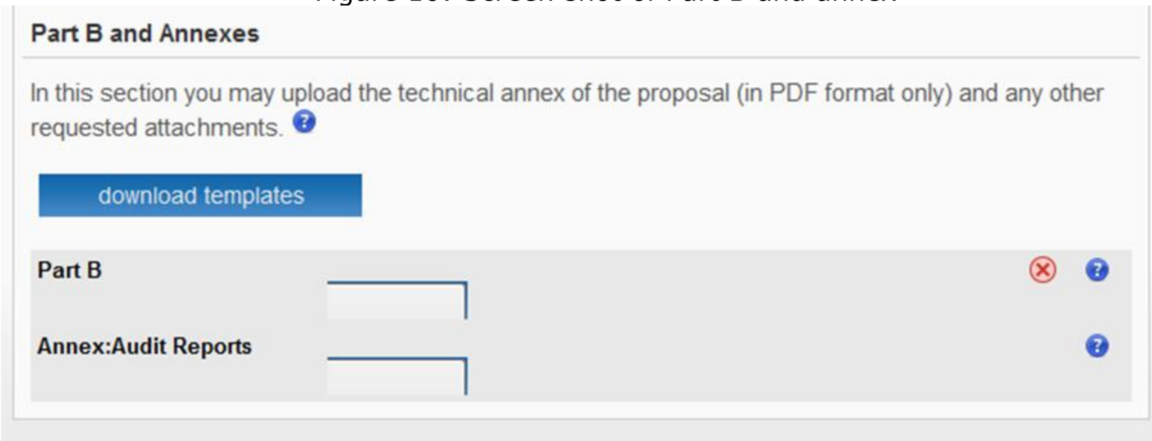
The applicants should provide:

- a list of grant applications (grants) or offers (procurement) submitted by the applicant and co-applicants to EU institutions or agencies for which the evaluation process is not yet finalised;

- EU actions managed by the applicant and co-applicants: any project managed by the applicant and co-applicants that has been awarded funding from an EU institution or agency in the last 4 years.

After finalising the proposal, according to the above guidelines and based on the template provided, please convert it into a PDF and upload it into the Electronic Submission System as "part B".

Figure 10: Screen shot of Part B and annex



3.2.4. Annex(es) – Audit Report(s)

The following annex(es) should be uploaded to complete your application:

Audit Report(s) for each organisation (applicant or co-applicant) requesting EU contribution above EUR 750 000, produced by an approved external auditor. This audit report shall certify the organisation's accounts of the last financial year available. Not applicable for public bodies and international organisations**.**

4. DEADLINE, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT, COMPLAINTS AND DATA PROTECTION

4.1. Submission deadline

The deadline for submission is indicated in the call notice**.**

The Electronic Submission System enables you to replace/update the proposal at any time prior to the deadline for submission.

You can indeed submit your proposal several times before the call deadline, e.g. to make updates or changes.

To view and/or change your submitted proposal, go to the 'My Proposals' page in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal. As long as the call has not been closed, the new submitted version will overwrite the previous one.

The **submission date** is the date of the **latest version** (update) submitted by you in the IT tool **before the deadline** for the submission of the proposals.

After the deadline for the submission of the proposals, changes or additions are no longer possible. **Do not wait until the very last day of the deadline to submit your proposal. This will significantly increase the risk of a last minute problem blocking your submission.**

While submitting your proposal, the Electronic Submission System of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal will carry out basic verification checks for completeness of the proposal, internal data consistency, virus infection, file types, size limitations etc. The system will also check page limits in specific parts of the proposal and, if necessary, suggest that you shorten it. After the deadline, any excess pages will be overprinted with a 'watermark' indicating to the evaluators that these pages must be disregarded.

If you fail to submit your proposal within the call deadline, your proposal will be disregarded by the system and will not be considered as submitted.

Please do not send your proposal by post or e-mail as only submissions via the Electronic Submission System shall be considered.

Once the proposal is submitted, the applicant will not hear from the Commission until the proposal is evaluated, unless:

- The Commission needs to contact the applicant to clarify matters such as eligibility or to request additional information;
- More information or supporting documents are needed to establish the legal entity or to perform the financial capacity check[6]; and / or
- The applicant made a complaint regarding the submission procedure.

4.2. Acknowledgement of receipt

The date and time of the latest submission (update) of the application will be automatically recorded and an acknowledgement of receipt email will be sent to the applicant organisation. This *date of submission* will be the one to be used as a reference date during the grant preparation phase for the successful applications.

If you do not receive an email with the acknowledgement of receipt, it is because the proposal has NOT been submitted.

None of the actions foreseen in the proposal can start before the date of submission of the proposal.

[6] Note: this is performed by the Research Executive Agency (REA).

If you miss the call deadline, your proposals will be disregarded by the system and cannot and will not be considered as submitted.

4.3. How to file a complaint

If you believe that submission failed due to a fault in the Electronic Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the Helpdesk on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal, explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal. The method of filing a complaint over other aspects of submission is explained in the information you receive via the electronic exchange system (see 'My Area' section of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal).

4.4. Data protection

All personal data included in the applications submitted via the Electronic Submission System will be processed by the Commission under Regulation No 45/2001 and according to the procedure announced with the relevant notifications submitted to the Commission's Data Protection Officer. A privacy statement informs all data subjects whose data are to be processed in the context of the proposal evaluation and ensuing grant agreement preparation, implementation and follow up; see also the Legal Notice page of the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

5. EVALUATION PROCESS

All proposals received by the Commission via the Electronic Submission System go through a multi-level process of evaluation looking at several categories of criteria: the eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria (though not necessarily in that order). This process starts after the deadline for submission indicated in the call. Please see the description of the evaluation process in the Call for proposals.

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by applying the strictest confidentiality rules.
All evaluation criteria are specified in the call for proposals. Please read these criteria carefully. Project proposals failing to meet these criteria will be excluded at the given stage of the evaluation process.

6. ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

The Commission can co-finance only those costs which are eligible according to the grant agreement signed between the Commission and the beneficiaries. The definitions of the direct and indirect costs can be found in the model grant agreement, Article 6.2 *Specific conditions for costs to be eligible*.

6.1. Eligibility of expenses

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant and which meet all the following criteria. They are:

- incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs related to the participation in projects' information meeting, to final reports and to audit certificates. The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement. If the beneficiaries can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, costs may be authorised before the project's starting date. However, under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

- indicated in the estimated budget for the action;
- necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiaries and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiaries are established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiaries;
- are in compliance with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- reasonable, justified, and in compliance with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiaries' internal accounting and registration procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The model for the certificate on the financial statement (CFS), in **Annex 5 of the model grant agreement**, provides comprehensive information on the different type of costs and the audit trail that needs to be ensured for them under point *3.1 Verification of eligibility of the costs declared*.

6.2. Ineligible costs

The costs listed below shall **NOT** be considered as eligible costs. Therefore, they will not be taken into account in the final calculation of the grant and must not be included in the budget (section 3 of Part A) at the application stage or at final reporting stage:

- costs which are not identifiable or verifiable on the basis of supporting documents
- capital increases and return on capital
- debt and debt service charges
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities
- other interest owed
- doubtful debts
- exchange losses
- costs declared by the beneficiary in connection with another specific project or work programme receiving an EU grant
- excessive or reckless expenditure
- gifts and presents
- touristic or cultural site programmes, tours or events for accompanying spouses, etc.
- contributions in kind (for instance, the free use of a school hall for a seminar)
- expenditure incurred outside the lifetime of the AMIF, ISF or DRUG project as stipulated in the grant agreement
- expenditure related to reports/audits not requested by the Commission
- honoraria, fees or the reimbursement of costs incurred due to the participation in the project of civil servants (including national experts, other agents or staff) of the Institutions of the European Union/EU Agencies
- **Value Added Tax – VAT**, when the activities to be supported through the grant fall within one of the following categories:
    - taxed/exempt activities with right of deduction;
    - activities engaged in by the beneficiary, where it is a State, regional or local government authority or another body governed by public law, acting as a public authority in the exercise of sovereign powers or prerogatives

exercised by Member States, under the special legal regime applicable to them in line with Art. 13.1 of the Council Directive 2006/112/EC.

Activities engaged in by a beneficiary as a public authority are activities carried out by public bodies under the special legal regime applicable to them, thus not including activities pursued by them under the same legal conditions as those that apply to private economic operator. These activities may relate to the powers of police, customs, taxes, definition and enforcement of public policies etc.

Examples of activities for which VAT would likely be eligible:

- training activities of policemen, unless the national legislation designates a public body as the sole entity having such a competence;
- awareness-raising activities, consultation and networking of civil society organisations, dissemination and communication activities about public policies, etc.

Examples of activities for which VAT would likely not be eligible:

- organisation of a conference by national administrations or meeting of public policy-makers designated by Member States with the aim of reviewing or harmonising legislations;
- law enforcement services of Member States setting up cooperation mechanisms with police offices in third countries/other law enforcement agencies and carrying out investigative actions;
- development and operation of infrastructure and IT systems in the field of internal security by ministries of Member States or public agencies, protection of such critical infrastructure against attacks;
- a regional/local government managing police services, etc.

The applicant should note that the Commission may request to be provided with the extract of the national legislation showing that specific activities are not to be considered as activities of public authorities.

Finally, note that beneficiaries receiving at the same time an **operating grant** from the EU budget may not claim indirect costs (overheads) if the operating grant covers the entire usual activity of the beneficiary; if the beneficiary is able to demonstrate clearly that the operating grant does not cover costs, including overheads, claimed under the action grant, (some of) the indirect costs can be considered eligible.